

ultimate product is not going to function very well. So I think those are the reasons that this won't be like past reports.

Congressional Support

Q. Do Members of Congress know about this yet, Mr. President, and what are they telling you back when you tell them about this proposal?

The Vice President. Let me respond to that. We're getting a lot of tremendous support from the Congress. Let me point out that some of the pioneers in this effort have been in the Congress. The chairmen and ranking members of the two principal committees on how the Government operates are all very supportive.

There will be some opposition. You know that, and we couldn't change what needs to be changed without running into opposition. But the ground has shifted. The world has changed. The American people are demanding that we change the way the Federal Government operates. It doesn't work well now. It costs too much money; it performs very poorly. We want to make it work better and cost less by implementing the recommendations of this report. We fully intend to do that.

Q. What about—get Congress to go along with the biennial budget? Will you be able to get Congress to go along with the biennial budget?

The President. I hope so. Well, in times past, over a majority of the Congress has supported a biennial budget. It can't be very satisfying for them to have to spend all their time doing that when they can spend more time evaluating how these programs work.

Labor Support

Q. What about the unions, Mr. President?

The Vice President. They've been very supportive. They've been very supportive. All three of the principal ones have endorsed it.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 10:20 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. The exchange portion of this item could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Statement on Senate Action Confirming Joycelyn Elders as Surgeon General

September 7, 1993

I am extremely pleased and gratified by the Senate's action today in confirming Dr. Joycelyn Elders as the Nation's next Surgeon General. Dr. Elders has consistently demonstrated a high level of intellect, courage, and wisdom in dealing with the wide range of health and social problems facing our country. Her dedication to improving the lives of all Americans, especially the children of America, won her the strong backing of a bipartisan majority of the Senate. I look forward to working with her in confronting the pressing issues facing the public health of our Nation.

I am especially grateful to Senator Kennedy for his steady leadership during the Labor and Human Resources Committee's consideration of Dr. Elders' nomination. Senator Kennedy's dedication to this nominee was extraordinary.

Statement by the Press Secretary on the President's Discussions With President Boris Yeltsin of Russia

September 7, 1993

President Clinton spoke by phone today with President Boris Yeltsin of Russia for about 40 minutes to discuss several bilateral and foreign policy issues.

President Clinton reiterated strong U.S. support for Russian political and market reform and the work of President Yeltsin and the Russian Government to keep those reforms on track. They discussed the status of existing and prospective U.S. assistance for the reform process.

The President agreed that last week's meeting in Washington of the Joint Commission on Energy and Space, led by Vice President Gore and Russian Prime Minister Chernomyrdin, was a great success. They also agreed on the need for further progress,